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STATE FOR AF/SPG AND EUR/RPM

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TAGS: PREL MOPS KPKO SU AU

SUBJECT: NATO REPORTS LITTLE PROGRESS IN BOOSTING NATO  
ASSISTANCE TO AU MISSION IN SUDAN

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1581

¶B. ADDIS ABABA 1472

¶C. STATE 98115 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES VICKI HUDDLESTON. REASON: 1.4 (D).

¶11. (C) SUMMARY. NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Planning Maurits Jochems and other NATO representatives cite little progress in convincing African Union officials to allow NATO to expand the types of assistance it is now providing to the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS), despite earlier consultations with the AU and formal requests exchanged between AU Commission Chairperson Konare and NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer. NATO will continue to provide AMIS with strategic airlift and training, but is awaiting formal requests from the AU for assistance in developing a "lessons learned" mechanism, conducting pre-deployment certification, or training AMIS officers who are to man a new forward joint mission headquarters. AU officials have rejected intelligence-sharing with NATO as well as the presence of NATO trainers in the field to conduct on-the-job capacity building. Compounding reluctance on the part of the AU, both France and Belgium have opposed NATO engagement with Africa, preferring to limit NATO's role to a military alliance rather than a political organization. Appointing a full-time NATO civilian representative at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa would strengthen NATO's ability to advocate for stronger engagement with the AU. END SUMMARY.

¶12. (SBU) On July 14, Charge and deputy pol-econ counselor met with visiting NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Planning Ambassador Maurits Jochems (Netherlands), accompanied by NATO International Staff Mr. Manlio Silvestri (Operations Division, Operations Section), Allied Joint Command Lisbon POLAD Mr. Hasan Aygun (Turkey), NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer (SMLO) to the African Union Captain Henrik Kudsk (Denmark) and Ambassador of Norway to Ethiopia Mette Ravn. Amb. Jochems provided a readout of recent meetings in Addis Ababa with officials of the African Union's Darfur Integrated Task Force (DITF), intended to follow up on earlier discussions with AU officials (ref B) held immediately after the May 15 AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) meeting that endorsed the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA).

¶13. (SBU) Amb. Jochems expressed disappointment that he had not been able to fully engage senior AU principals during his most recent visit: AU Commission Chairperson Konare was in Brazil (participating with the heads of state of Senegal, Ghana, Cape Verde and others in the "Second Conference of

Intellectuals from Africa and the Diaspora") and would not arrive in Brussels until mid-day July 18 for the EU-AU pledging conference on AMIS; as Konare would depart Brussels the following morning with AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ambassador Said Djinnit, Konare would not have the opportunity to address the North Atlantic Council (NAC). NATO SYG Jaap de Hoop Scheffer hoped to meet with Konare and Djinnit on the margins of the conference to follow up on Konare's June 2 letter, which requested limited NATO assistance to AMIS (ref A). Instead, Jochems had met with AU DITF Head Ambassador Ki Doulaye Corentin, AU DITF POLAD Dr. Solomon Gomes, and other working-level officials responsible for AMIS.

¶4. (C) Whether AMIS would be extended from September 30 to the end of December would largely depend on available financing, Jochems said, as well as on GOS approval. NATO SMLO Kudsk observed that the June 27 AU PSC decision had affirmed that AMIS would withdraw by September 30, in the absence of any agreement on UN transition, but could extend if an agreement was reached. Norwegian ambassador commented that this was meant to pressure the GOS. POLAD Aygun noted that were the GOS to offer to be a donor to AMIS, it would challenge both the AU and UN.

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NATO ASSISTANCE STILL LIMITED TO AIRLIFT AND TRAINING

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¶5. (SBU) NATO was already providing assistance to AMIS in two specific areas approved by the NAC, Jochems said. With the EU, NATO was providing strategic lift for the autumn troop rotations of African battalions serving in Darfur; "80 per cent" of such planning was complete. Secondly, NATO could

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continue to provide a "package of training," in cooperation with SHAPE and Joint Command Lisbon.

¶6. (C) On the other hand, "we did not make much progress" with the AU on three new areas of proposed assistance approved by the NAC, Jochems said. While AU DITF officials were "positive" about NATO helping to establish a "lessons learned" mechanism to study AMIS for future AU peace support operations, as well as about pre-deployment certification of troops to be deployed to Darfur, there had already been agreement in May that NATO would send experts to work on both. (NOTE: Both "lessons learned" and pre-deployment certification are specifically mentioned in Konare's June 2 request to Scheffer; see ref A. END NOTE.) NATO was also proposing to provide training to assist AMIS in establishing a Joint Operations Center within the proposed Forward Joint Mission Headquarters, which would enhance AMIS command and control, but had been told to delay sending any training expert to El Fasher until a newly recruited AMIS Joint Chief of Staff from Zambia and other AMIS staff officers had arrived. NATO SMLO Kudsk explained that AU DITF Head Ambassador Ki Doulaye Corentin had promised to send formal diplomatic notes requesting NATO assistance in each of these three areas, but that none had been received yet by NATO. Jochems complained that by requiring such an exchange of diplomatic notes, the AU treated partners differently; NATO did not command the same respect at the AU as the United States, for example. Charge agreed that the AU appeared reluctant to engage NATO and only did the "minimum." She noted that visiting AF A/S Frazer had advocated strongly with Konare to engage NATO.

¶7. (C) Jochems reported that two areas of assistance not yet fully approved by the NAC had nevertheless been rejected by the AU. Intelligence-sharing with NATO was "dismissed out of hand" by the AU (Commissioner Djinnit did not rule out bilateral intelligence-sharing, however), while on-the-job capacity building (consisting of NATO trainers in the field, or "boots on the ground," to advise AMIS battalions) was deemed "too sensitive for the Government of Sudan." NATO

therefore needed to continue to maintain a low profile. Jochems noted that AU Commissioner Djinnit appeared to be cautious in engaging NATO, but saw the merits of further assistance, while AU DITF POLAD Dr. Solomon Gomes was reluctant to espouse any position. In general, Jochems observed, the AU was impressed by the "machinery" of NATO but preferred to have NATO support long-term capacity building (e.g., for the African Standby Force).

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NATO CAN PLAY LIMITED ROLE IN DISARMING FIGHTERS  
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18. (C) While the UK was taking the lead in response to the AU's June 5 request to partners for 27 experts to run a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) course in each of AMIS's 8 sectors, it was important not to "push NATO out," Jochems said. The UK had assured him that it would find a role for NATO. Jochems explained that NATO's experience was limited to disarmament of combatants in Macedonia and Afghanistan; demobilization and reintegration were activities that required significant donor assistance (e.g., from the World Bank). "We can only do the first 'D,'" he quipped. Due to concerns about force protection and inadequate medical care, NATO military personnel could take the lead on disarmament efforts at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, AMIS headquarters in El Fasher, or in Khartoum, but not in the individual sectors in the field. NATO SMLO Kudsk noted that partners had asked for the AU to elaborate further on its need for DDR assistance. (NOTE: UK and DFID officials have subsequently briefed partners that the UK will lead a limited "scoping mission" in Darfur in mid-August, with the participation of NATO and AU DITF representatives, but that the UK currently does not have any plans to provide any additional assistance for large-scale DDR. No additional partners, including Japan, have announced any assistance for DDR. END NOTE.)

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"INTERNAL NATO PROBLEMS" A BARRIER TO FURTHER ENGAGEMENT  
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19. (C/NF) In addition to reluctance on the part of the AU, Jochems (a career Dutch diplomat) complained that some NATO

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members had their own agenda and opposed NATO engagement with Africa. Belgian and French nationals seconded to NATO reported to their own capitals, rather than exercise allegiance to NATO. Belgium often questioned "whether NATO should play a role at all," Jochems said. Jochems elaborated on France's opposition to any political engagement by NATO, asserting that France preferred to limit NATO's role to solely a military alliance. While NATO need not serve as the world's policeman, it could provide training to local security forces in the Middle East and Africa, Jochems said, but France had opposed this. With NATO playing a role in the Middle East, "the cost is not doing training in Africa," he said. "They always try to keep us out of Africa," Jochems added. NATO SMLO Kudsk observed that at the NAC, France had opposed NATO playing any role in DDR in Darfur.

110. (C/NF) While NATO was a political-military organization, France and the EU stressed NATO's military role, preferring not to include Canada and other partners in political consultations but rather to include only the United States. As an example, Jochems cited the limited attendance at the proposed EU-hosted "political luncheon" at the AMIS pledging conference, which was restricted to the UN SYG, the EU, Finland (as the EU presidency), the United States, the AU, and Sudanese FM Lam Akol; major AMIS donors, such as the UK or the Netherlands, had not been invited.

111. (C) Jochems expressed concern about NATO engagement with the African Union in the long term if AMIS ended, noting that the USG had taken a "hard line" in pre-pledging conference

discussions among partners in Washington. Charge responded that Konare had not objected when senior USG officials pushed for AMIS to end by September 30 and for a transition from AMIS to a UN peacekeeping operation, but that the July 18 pledging conference would help clarify the future of AMIS. The United States would continue strongly advocating that the AU engage NATO, she added. Jochems reported that he would return to Addis Ababa for further consultations prior to September 30.

**¶12. (C) COMMENT:** The frank observations by DASG Jochems and other NATO officials highlight the difficulties of pushing the AU to engage NATO further and to expand NATO assistance to the AU mission in Darfur. Despite the exchanges of formal notes between AU Chairperson Konare and the NATO SYG (ref A), and similar appeals by Washington (ref C), AU peacekeeping planners appear reluctant to expand NATO's role in Darfur beyond strategic airlift and training. Continued political engagement with the AU will be essential to advocate for strengthening cooperation with NATO; the absence of a NATO political representative in Addis Ababa (NATO has been represented only by its military liaison office) may hamper its ability to lobby AU Commission principals consistently and effectively. END COMMENT.

HUDDLESTON